



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

A PROCLAMATION
NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA/SPECTRUM DISORDER
AWARENESS MONTH

- WHEREAS: Neuromyelitis Optica/Spectrum Disorder (NMO) is an uncommon life-threatening autoimmune disease of the central nervous system that may affect the optic nerves, spinal cord, and brain; and
- WHEREAS: Individuals with NMO commonly develop optic neuritis, which causes pain in the eyes, as well as vision loss. NMO is also associated with transverse myelitis, causing weakness, numbness, possible paralysis of the arms and legs, sensory disturbances, and loss of intestinal control; and
- WHEREAS: As NMO progresses, the cells and antibodies of the immune system attack and destroy myelin cells throughout the optic nerves and spinal cord. NMO was previously considered a severe variant of multiple sclerosis (MS), though recent discoveries have concluded NMO is a separate disease due to the severity of its attacks and its tendency to strike the optic nerves and spinal cord at its earlier stages; and
- WHEREAS: An antibody known as NMO-Immunoglobulin G (NMO-IgG) is present in approximately 70 percent of those with NMO, though it is not found in individuals diagnosed with MS or other similar conditions. Today, the NMO-IgG test can be ordered by any primary care physician; and
- WHEREAS: Because NMO is frequently mistaken with MS or other autoimmune conditions, public awareness is critical to ensure early detection and accurate treatment for those suffering from the disease. Finding a cure for NMO has the potential to aid in the discovery of solutions for fighting other autoimmune diseases, including MS, Lupus, and Sjögren's; and
- WHEREAS: National, state and local organizations are striving to uncover ways to better treat and manage the symptoms of NMO and ensure those afflicted maintain an adequate quality of life. The Guthy-Jackson Charitable Foundation, along with patients, caregivers, scientists, clinicians, and industry and regulatory communities across the State of Georgia are participating in Neuromyelitis Optica/Spectrum Disorder Awareness Month to enhance public awareness of the autoimmune disease and raise funds for present and future research; now
- THEREFORE: I, NATHAN DEAL, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim March 2017 as NEUROMYELITIS OPTICA/SPECTRUM DISORDER AWARENESS MONTH in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 22nd day of February in the year of our Lord two thousand seventeen.



Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

ATTEST

Chris W. Riley
CHIEF OF STAFF